

THE COMMONWEALTH

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Friday, March 9, 1917

Remarkable how congress does hate
to quit and go home:

Our wife found a bean in the pantry
yesterday and now she's saving it for
Sunday dinner. Come over, Bill:

There is no accounting for the ex-
travagance of American women. Cab-
bage leaves are now being used for per-
sonal adornment.

No, we're not howling for war and
we're not bellowing against it, for we
don't want to be a fool either way. But
if it comes there is only one flag for us.

It has been found by chemical pro-
cess that a ton of saw-dust will yield
a quarter of a ton of sugar. That set-
tles it—up goes the price of saw-dust.

The decent folks "back home" are
making it evident that they do not sup-
port the action of those Senators who
killed the armed neutrality bill.

Stone makes a pitiful showing be-
fore his home people and looks like a
whipped dog when he is informed that
he will likely lose the chairmanship of
the foreign relations committee.

Even Vardaman of Mississippi is
trying to ease out, but his colleague
John Sharp Williams, will not let him
without a strong rebuke. Now Varda-
man is sorry.

All kinds of excuses are being pre-
pared by "the twelve" for circula-
tion among their constituents, but it
looks as though the people will have
none of them, and each Senator will
have to stand the brunt of his actions.

Iowa, too, through the general assem-
bly repudiates her senators Kenyan and
Cummings in the filibuster on the armed
ship bill stigmatizing their scorn and
contempt for the ignominy brought upon
the state by their actions.

The members of the Forsyth Post
G. A. R. of Toledo, Ohio are up in arms
over the unpatriotic spirit of Congress-
man Sherwood in registering his vote
against the neutrality bill. Look out
Ike, you'll likely lose your job, besides
having a bad time of it when you get
back home.

THE TOGA DISGRACED

Although overwhelmingly supported
the armed neutrality bill, which passed
the congress with but thirteen dis-
sents, was defeated in the Senate
because twelve members of that body
decided to kill it, regardless of its
value, and these twelve can give no
valid reason for their actions beyond
the statement that they thought too
much power would be put into the
hands of the president. This is the rea-
son given, but it is not the true one,
for the majority of these twelve men.
With them it is a question of expedi-
ency, not right, and because they have
lent themselves to the degrading act
of pandering to the pro-German element
rather than assert their American man-
hood the stigma of disgrace will ever
hang to their senatorial togas.

Who are these that have considered
their German constituents, rather than
their prerogatives of being American
citizens? Stone, represents Missouri,
where is quite a large German popula-
tion hence it is that, though he is chair-
man of the Foreign Relations Commit-
tee, he has side-tracked his honorable
standing for the chance of pandering
to those "back home," and yet, if we
mistake not, he it was who made a
grand stand play that these Germans
are loyal subjects of the United States.

LaFollette, of Milwaukee, a German
speaking town, where that language is
preferred to the United States; and
and his henchman Norris of Nebraska,
who should have known better, and did
not, so will have to stand the brunt of
public displeasure. Then comes Clapp
of Minnesota; Cummins of Iowa; Gron-
a of North Dakota; Kenyon of Iowa,

and Works of California, a pretty
crowd of standpatters, and with these
may be thrown in a few democrats who
will hear further from the country for
their dishonored act.

Now let us consider the bill that was
recommended by the president, as be-
ing necessary for him to act, in the in-
terim of Congress, that these men so
thoroughly object to, and what is there
in the bill that should not be the right
of the president at all times to put into
force. In order that all may be clear
as to its provisions the section of the
bill that caused dissension on the part
of "the twelve" is here given in full,
as follows:

"The commanders and crews of
all merchant vessels of the United
States and bearing the registry of the
United States are hereby autho-
rized to arm and defend such ves-
sels against unlawful attacks, and
the President of the United States
is hereby authorized and empower-
ed to supply such vessels with de-
fensive arms, fore and aft, and also
with the necessary ammunition and
means of making use of them; and
that he be, and is hereby, authoriz-
ed and empowered to employ such
other instrumentalities and methods
as may in his judgment and discre-
tion, seem necessary and adequate
to protect such vessels and the citi-
zens of the United States in their
lawful and peaceful pursuits on the
high seas."

If these were times of peace instead
of war there should be no serious ob-
jection to enacting into law such a pro-
vision since it states emphatically that
the purpose of this defense is to be
used against unlawful attacks, but
since there is a war in which under sea
vessels are used against merchantmen
of all nations, whether they be bellig-
erents or neutrals, a protection is ab-
solutely necessary unless we are pre-
pared to consider ourselves under a
blockade, and this would denote us to
the whole world as cowards.

The president is as we all know, the
commander-in-chief of the army and
navy, and it would appear that he had
the power to arm United States ves-
sels against unlawful attacks, and many
have wondered why he appeared before
congress and asked for this power,
which seemed to be his by virtue of his
office. Let us see:

It will be remembered that when
Ambassador Gerard was recalled from

Berlin, when diplomatic relations were
severed with Germany, he was almost
forced to revive a treaty that was ef-
fected early in the nineteenth century.
Mr. Gerard refused, and, because of
his refusal, he suffered no few indigni-
ties at the hands of German officials.
The Germans were wise for in that
treaty it prevented the United States
from arming her merchant ships, except
by consent of the German government,
while amity exists between the two
countries.

President Wilson was aware of this
treaty and also of a statute of 1819 in
which it expressly provides that mer-
chant vessels must not defend them-
selves against armed vessels of a nation
with which we are at amity.

Thus then whilst they can arm
themselves they must not use such arm-
ament against German submarines. Be-
cause we are technically at amity with
Germany, so that it were folly for the
president to arm merchant ships, which
they could not use, or, if they did, be
treated as pirates according to our own
statutes.

Thus it is that the president, who has
authority to arm merchant ships of Uni-
ted States registry, appeared before
congress and ask that laws be enacted
by which there would be a legal right
for ships to be armed fore and aft, and
to protect themselves against unlaw-
ful attack.

The senators who defeated the pas-
sage of this bill or law were fully cog-
nizant of this old statute, and the dis-
ability under which the merchant ships
were working, and which also explains
why the ships of United States regis-
try are now tied up at the different
docks of the country rather than risk
the voyage without protection, or arm-
ing themselves and be classed pirates,
and the officers and men being made
prisoners, and probably executed as be-
ing "without the pale".

With all these things in mind the act
of rejection of a law that is so vital
to the well being of the seamen of this
country, and the utter disregard for the
honor of the United States, in order
that a few "back-homers," of foreign
birth or parentage, may be gratified at
defeating the purposes of this country,
makes the offence so great that these
men should be brought to the bar of
the senate and a full explanation de-
manded so that the people of the coun-
try may know what manner of men
they are.

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By virtue of a certain mortgage to
M. Hoffman & Bro. by Harrod Johnson
and wife, Henrietta Johnson, on the 18
day of January, 1910, which is re-
corded in the Register of Deeds office
of Halifax county, North Carolina, in
Book 211, page 447, we will sell for
cash to the highest bidder at public
auction, at the Court house door in
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ens' line, which runs into the old Tar-
boro road; thence up the path to Aus-
tin Spell's line; thence with Spell's
line to a red oak; thence with Spell's
line to a post oak; thence back to the
path along Simon Smith's line to the
beginning, and being the place where
Harrod Johnson lived prior to his
death.
This the 1st, day of March, 1917.
M. Hoffman & Bro., Mortgagee.
Herbert Smith, Assignee.

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